

From: Paul Kriescher  
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Comment: July 13, 2004

Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Office  
Att'n: Northeast NPR-A Planning Team  
222 West Seventh Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7599

Dear Planning Team,

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Please accept these comments on the proposed amendment to the oil and gas leasing plan for the Northeast National Petroleum Reserve Environmental Impact Statement. I am especially concerned about the impact the Bureau of Land Management's proposal would have on the area around Teshekpuk Lake, one of the most unique and important wetlands in the entire Arctic.

2

I urge you to adopt Alternative A, the "No Action" alternative, because it would maintain protection for the entire Teshekpuk Lake Surface Protection Area. This extraordinary ecosystem provides critical habitat for molting geese and nesting habitat for Steller's eiders, northern pintails, yellow-billed loons and other species. It also supports a vitally important caribou herd that Alaska natives depend on for their subsistence.

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Eighty-seven percent of the northeastern reserve is already open to oil and gas companies for leasing. In the five years since the original 1998 northeast plan, additional information and analyses have been accumulated that point toward significant impacts on fish and wildlife if more of this sensitive area is opened.

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Basic

It would be a huge mistake to risk the internationally significant ecological resources of Teshekpuk Lake for a short-term supply of energy, especially when we know that the United States cannot drill its way to energy independence.

The estimated 800,000 barrels of oil/day that will come from this area of the Reserve would more easily be met through energy efficiency enhancements in cars. Specifically, raising CAFE standards for cars to 40 mpg would save more than 1.5 million barrels a day within 6 to 8 years (according to the Union of Concerned Scientists) while also creating a beneficial lure for people to buy new cars (further stimulating the economy) because of the significant savings they would see at the pump.

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Again, I urge you to choose Alternative A, the "No Action" alternative, to protect the reserve's irreplaceable wildlife, wilderness and subsistence values for future generations.

Sincerely,

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Attached: None